

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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It took the Town of Frederick nearly 80 years to grow from 300 residents to its 1990 population of just under 1,000. Between 1990 and 2000, Frederick's population more than doubled to 2,475 people and between 2000 and 2010 it tripled to the current population of approximately 8,500. In response to this rapid growth, the citizens of Frederick acknowledged that it was time to take steps to preserve and manage valuable open lands and passed a ballot question to establish the Open Space, Development, and Maintenance Fund in 1999.



Figure 1-1: Raspberry Hill Park, one of the Town's newest Pocket Parks.

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In 2006, the Town adopted the Comprehensive Plan which now serves as the Town's guide for future land use and development decisions. And in early 2010, the Town updated its Land Use Code (Community Design Principles and Development Standards) to ensure that, as growth occurs, so would development of parks, trails and, open space. Each of these steps furthered the process of addressing how parks, open space, and trails should be planned in Frederick, but did not provide a cohesive or detailed vision. The following Parks Open Space and Trails Master Plan (P.O.S.T. Plan) has been crafted to address this need. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the P.O.S.T. Plan and describes how it relates to the Town's adopted planning documents.

A number of concepts have evolved out of the P.O.S.T. Plan process that are at the core of the findings and recommendations included in this Master Plan. Each of the concepts summarized below is supported by additional detail in the full report that follows.

1.1 CREATING A LIVABLE COMMUNITY

Providing an integrated system of park, open space, and trails is critical to the economic vitality and health of a community (quality of life). Study after study has shown that homes near parks, trails and open space increase in value and sell faster than homes that are not. A strong P.O.S.T. system is one of the highest priorities businesses and skilled workers will consider when making decisions to relocate, build, or expand in a community.¹ In order for Frederick to compete with surrounding communities for future businesses, the Town must continually strive to increase its quality of life.

"Studies in a wide range of urban areas have documented increases in real estate value for residences located near parks, with increments in real estate value attributed to individual parks ranging into millions of dollars. Homes near greenways have also been shown to sell for higher prices than those farther away."
The Trust for Public Land

Parks, open space, and trails facilitate healthy lifestyle choices by providing opportunities for residents to play outdoors or walk or ride their bikes to work. It is especially important to provide high quality recreation amenities for the children of Frederick in order to compete with the range of indoor activities most of today's youth have at their disposal. It is safe to say that the proximity of parks and trails to residents here in Colorado is a major factor in the state being listed in a recent study as the "fittest" in the country.²

¹ Compton, Jon L., Lisa L. Love, and Thomas More. 1997. An Empirical Study of the Role of Recreation, Parks and Open Space of Companies' Location Decisions. Journal of Park and Recreation Administration (1997): 37 -58.

² Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation – 2010 Annual Report. F as in Fat: How Obesity

1.2 IMPROVING EXISTING SYSTEMS

The Town of Frederick has a strong foundation in place for its P.O.S.T. system. This includes a full complement of well planned parks which are within walking distance of most residents, neighborhoods with integrated open space and trail systems, and a number of parcels that have been preserved via conservation easements. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code have established a set of regulations that will result in the construction of new P.O.S.T. facilities as development occurs. While many of the basic P.O.S.T. elements are already in place, there is still a need to improve the Town's existing the P.O.S.T. system and policies including:

- ✦ Adding amenities and enhancing existing parks,
- ✦ Preserving critical open space parcels potentially threatened by development,
- ✦ Creating connections between existing neighborhoods and trails,
- ✦ Constructing new trails to existing and future destinations, and
- ✦ Adjusting the P.O.S.T. dedication requirements in the Land Use Code to better achieve the community's vision.



Figure 1-2: Example of a missing trail link.

Chapter 3 provides a summary of the evaluation of the existing P.O.S.T. facilities in Frederick, **Chapters 5 and 6** address specific recommendations for improving the Town's P.O.S.T. systems, and **Chapter 8** provides a strategy for implementing the recommendations.

1.3 PROVIDING AN EQUITABLE P.O.S.T. SYSTEM

One of the objectives of the Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan is to attempt to create equitable (not necessarily equal) recreational resources for each neighborhood. In order to create a more balanced P.O.S.T. system for established neighborhoods, this plan provides recommendations for adding facilities such as shade shelters, benches, picnic tables, and other site amenities. This way, each park in the system would offer residents a basic set of amenities

in their nearest park. Improving existing facilities extends to accessibility for the disabled community and alternate modes of transportation. Suggested accessibility enhancements as well as improvements to existing parks are included in the Master Plan recommendations which are covered in [Chapter 5](#) and [Chapter 6](#).

The development regulations and standards established in the updated Land Use Code will continue to provide the direction the Board of Trustees and Commissions will need to effectively plan equitable distribution of P.O.S.T. assets for new neighborhoods. Changes to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code are proposed in a number of sections of the P.O.S.T. Plan.

1.3.1 LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

Reaching out to the residents of Frederick in order to understand their vision for the P.O.S.T. Plan was central to the P.O.S.T. planning process. Regular public meetings, stakeholder forums, web survey, and a project website were just a few of the tools that were employed to understand the residents needs and desires regarding parks, open space, and trails. Wherever possible, the direction provided by the public was used to guide the P.O.S.T. Plan recommendations. [Chapter 4](#) provides a brief overview of the opinions and suggestions offered by the public during the public outreach process.

The Town may want to consider continuing the public outreach process -- especially as major elements of the P.O.S.T. Plan are being implemented.

1.4 ESTABLISHING POLICIES FOR DECISION-MAKING

Throughout the life of the Master Plan, difficult issues will arise regarding the development



Figure 1-3: An accessible playground.



Figure 1-4: Citizens of all ages participated in public meetings.

and management of the P.O.S.T. system. It will be essential to have a set of guidelines (Goals and Policies) in place that defines the Town's position regarding the on-going issues that the Town will face. **Chapter 5** of the Master Plan outlines the recommended Goals and Policies that support this Master Plan. It will be the Board of Trustees and Town Staff's challenge to keep the P.O.S.T. Plan's Goals and Policies up to date as new guidelines are needed to address unforeseen circumstances.

1.5 PLANNING FOR FUTURE PARK NEEDS

At build-out, Frederick's population is projected to be between 70,000 and 80,000 people. The Community Design Principles and Development Standards (Land Use Code Article 2) includes provisions that require new development to pay its own way when it comes to providing the parks these new residents will expect.

One of the primary objectives of the P.O.S.T. Plan was to evaluate if following the design standards included in the Land Use Code would result in a park system that is consistent with the level-of-service Frederick's current residents enjoy. **Chapter 6** describes the recommendations for amending the Land Use Code which will result in a system of Pocket

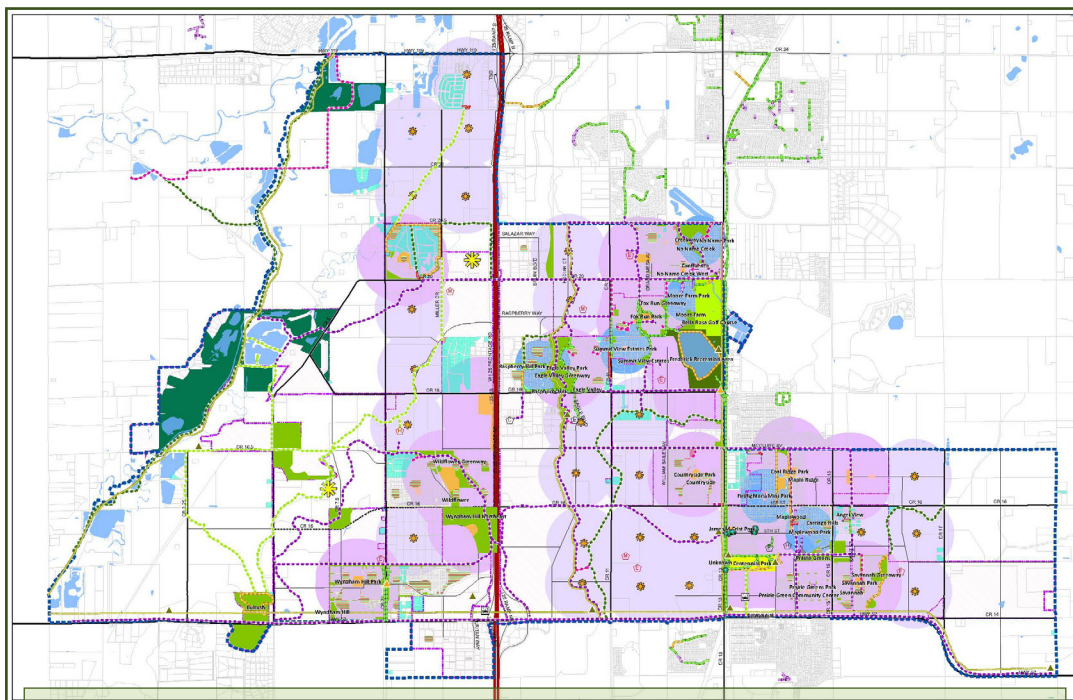


Figure 1-5: Distribution of future Neighborhood Parks.

Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Community Parks that will be sustainable and still satisfy Frederick's park needs as it reaches its maximum population.

1.6 *PRESERVING CRITICAL HABITATS*

The results of the P.O.S.T. Plan public opinion survey highlighted the importance that the residents of Frederick place on preserving sensitive wildlife habitats, creek corridors, wetlands, and the rural character of the town. This is consistent with the mandate the community provided in 1999 by passing the Open Space Sales Tax. While the Land Use Code will result in approximately 20% of the land area in new residential development being set aside as open space, this will not preserve all of the open lands the community has indicated should be protected. The P.O.S.T. Plan has mapped the areas in Frederick that the Stakeholders felt were important to preserve and it outlines a process for evaluating and prioritizing potential open space parcels. In addition, [Chapter 6](#) includes a Preservation Tool Box that describes a range of options for creating an open space system in the least costly manner. Frederick has the added benefit of being able to leverage funding from the Open Space Sales Tax to set aside even more open space and to develop new trails than would otherwise be possible.

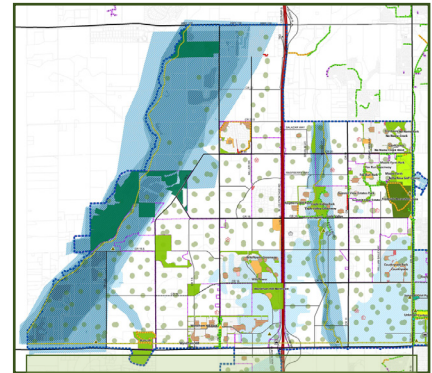


Figure 1-6: High priority areas for preservation identified by stakeholders.

1.7 *TRAILS - AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF THE PLAN*

Frederick's trail network has grown alongside and, for the most part, kept pace with residential land development over the years. Over time Town staff, the Board of Trustees, and the residents of Frederick have ensured that new subdivisions provide greater trail connectivity and a variety of trail experiences than in older developments. Larger corridor projects like the Colorado Boulevard Trail have provided a backbone with which other trails feed into. Through the P.O.S.T. Plan, future trail and transportation needs in Frederick are addressed through new standards, policies, and facility recommendations. The P.O.S.T. Plan incorporates important trail planning concepts for Frederick including:

- ✿ Maximizing dedication of future trails and right-of-ways to expand the existing system
- ✿ Requiring developers to provide for internal trails that link streets and neighborhoods
- ✿ Concentrating public resources on construction of infill linkages and strategic trail corridors

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The P.O.S.T. Plan envisions a large network of future trails:

- Over 40 miles of wide, concrete multi-use pathways intended to provide continuous regional connections
- Nearly 6 miles of concrete connector trails to provide new connections between existing neighborhoods and regional trails
- Nearly 15 miles of wide natural surface trails to provide a varied and more natural trail experience and 10 miles of narrower natural surface trails
- New underpasses to facilitate safe crossings of I-25
- New trailheads to provide additional system accessibility to residents and visitors

Recommended trail segments are prioritized into short, mid, and long-term connections. Many potential linkages may be dependent on new development for implementation. As such, the timeline for implementation cannot be predicted. The Planning Commission and Parks and Open Space Commission are encouraged to provide feedback to the Board of Trustees on additional internal trail connections in proposed subdivisions as they are being reviewed.

Chapter 6 and **Chapter 8** include summaries of the recommendations for Frederick's trail system.

1.8 *MAKING MAINTENANCE A PRIORITY*

The residents of Frederick frequently emphasized the importance of maintaining the Town's parks, open space, and trails at a high level. This sentiment was repeated at each stage of the public outreach process. Because of this, one of the primary policy recommendations in the Master Plan is that the Town should not construct new P.O.S.T. facility that will need to be maintained by the Town without first making provisions to provide for on-going maintenance. The public was also clear that parks did not need to be a wall-to-wall manicured landscape, but rather could be a mix of native and manicured landscapes. **Chapter 7** of the P.O.S.T. Plan focuses exclusively on maintenance of the P.O.S.T. facilities. It includes specific recommendations for adopting appropriate levels of maintenance for P.O.S.T. facilities.

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